

REMARKS

Claims 12, 19, 20 and 22-24 are presently pending in the application.

By this amendment, claims 1, 2, and 11 have been canceled. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Further, entry of these amendments after final is respectfully requested since these amendments simply place the application in condition for allowance.

At the outset, Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's indication in Paper No. 27 that claims 12, 19, 20, and 22-24 are allowable.

However, in Paper No. 27, the Examiner has maintained her rejections of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by each of EP 0 953 550 ("EP '550"), U.S. Patent No. 5,254,392 of Burns et al. ("Burns"), and U.S. Patent No. 6,068,914 of Boire et al. ("Boire"). The Examiner has also rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP '550 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,948,481 of Yan et al. ("Yan"), over Burns in view of Yan, and over Boire in view of Yan. While not necessarily agreeing with the Examiner's arguments in support of these rejections, claims 1, 2, and 11 have been canceled by this amendment, rendering these rejections inapplicable.


In conclusion, in view of the preceding Amendments and Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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